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MEMORANDUM FOR: Inspector General

VIA: Chief/Office of Medical Services

FROM: The Undersigned

SUBJECT: Ventilation and Humidity Problems in the

Work Area

7 December 1989

The undersigned request that immediate action be taken to address and resolve apparent serious health-related problems which are inherent in many areas of the New Headquarters Building and which have been affecting the health and morale, more specifically, of the personnel who work in SE Division. The ventilation and humidity in 1V31, for example, is documented by Allied as being sub-standard for human comfort. The comfort range for ventilation is supposed to be 35 to 40 and was initially found to be 0 to 5 in many sections of this large room. Additionally the humidity is approximately 10 percent lower than the recommended level for human comfort but is maintained at that level because of the equipment located in the room. According to Allied, fresh air is only brought into this building when the heating and/or cooling systems are operating; however, when the thermostat setting is satisfied, the amount of fresh air intake is reduced to a

minimum. Allied further stated that major renovations would be required to correct this problem.

- 2. Due to the insufficient ventilation and humidity levels, employees are experiencing the following health problems with increasing severity:
- a.) burning, watery eyes (noted by at least one medical doctor to be due to the low humidity)
- b.) dry, sore throats and nasal passages(resulting in several employees needing medical attention for severe sinus infections)
- c.) lethargy, inability to concentrate (greatly reducing productivity)
- d.) severe headaches which (resulting in the need to take prescribed medication and, in some cases, sick leave for doctor visits.)
- e.) fans used to circulate the dead air are heavily covered with lint and dust and computer vents on all Personal Computers are clogged with dust--an indication of the amount of pollution which is in the air.
- 3. These problems and the effects they are having on employees have been reported repeatedly over the last three months to Logistics, Health and Safety Division of OMS and Allied Services. To date, no action, beyond minor adjustments, has been taken by any office to investigate the

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problem or provide a healthy atmosphere in which employees can work productively.